

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 02724 01 OF 02 290247Z POSS DUPE
ACTION IO-14

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P 290240Z JUN 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2327

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 02724

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNSC

SUBJECT: UN REFORM: SYG'S VIEWS ON MEETING OF SC
MEMBERS AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL

REF: USUN 2665

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH AMB LEONARD AND CANADIAN
AMB BARTON JUNE 27 SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM EXPRESSED
VIEW THAT CONFIDENTIAL MEETING OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL
MEMBERS TO HEAR ORAL SYG REPORT AND EXCHANGE VIEWS ON IT
WAS A GOOD IDEA. BARTON WILL CONSULT WITH OTHER SC
MEMBERS ABOUT INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF SUCH MEETING DURING
HIS SC PRESIDENCY IN JULY. MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS
WOULD BE DURING EARLY DAYS OF UNGA IN SEPT. PROBLEM OF
CUTTING DOWN GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA WAS ALSO DISCUSSED.
END SUMMARY.

2. PURSUANT TO WESTERN FIVE DECISION OF JUNE 20
(REFTEL), CANADIAN AMB BARTON AND US AMB LEONARD CALLED
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PAGE 02 USUN N 02724 01 OF 02 290247Z POSS DUPE

ON SYG (EXEC ASST AHMED ALSO PRESENT) JUNE 27 TO DISCUSS
POSSIBILITY OF CLOSED MEETING OF SC MEMBERS
AT FM LEVEL AT WHICH SYG WOULD MAKE ORAL REPORT AS
BASIS FOR INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AMONG MEMBERS.
NOTING HIS FOREIGN MINISTER'S DISCUSSION OF
THIS IDEA WITH SYG LAST SEPT AND SYG'S RECENT DISCUSSION
WITH IO ASST SECY MAYNES, BARTON INFORMED WALDHEIM

OF WESTERN FIVE DISCUSSION OF IDEA. HE EXPLAINED THAT WHAT WAS ENVISAGED WAS COMPLETELY UNSTRUCTURED AND INFORMAL DISCUSSION ON BASIS OF ORAL AND ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL REPORT BY SYG.

3. WALDHEIM THOUGHT PROPOSAL WAS BASICALLY A GOOD IDEA BUT SUGGESTED THAT CARE WAS REQUIRED IN LIGHT OF PAST EXPERIENCE WHEN FM-LEVEL MEETING WAS HELD AND WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL. THERE HAD BEEN SERIES OF SET SPEECHES AND FMS HAD BEEN RATHER ANNOYED AT HAVING BEEN CONVENED FOR WHAT HAD SEEMED TO THEM A RATHER POINTLESS EXERCISE. NEVERTHELESS, IF HANDLED PROPERLY SYG THOUGHT MEETING SUCH AS WE HAVE IN MIND WOULD ENHANCE STATURE OF SC AND COULD BE USEFUL. HE AGREED IT SHOULD BE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND THAT HE COULD MAKE ORAL REPORT, SPEAKING FROM NOTES, AS HE DOES IN INFORMAL SC CONSULTATIONS, WITH NO TEXT OR FORMAL RECORD. HE SUGGESTED TWO OPTIONS: (A) A REGULAR AGENDA OF TWO OR THREE SPECIFIC ITEMS, SUCH AS SOUTHERN AFRICA (OR SITUATION IN AFRICA AS A WHOLE), MIDDLE EAST OR CYPRUS, OR (B) A GENERAL POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, COMPARABLE TO SYG'S INTRODUCTION TO HIS ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GA OR POSSIBLY FOCUSING ONLY ON CERTAIN PROBLEMS. HE WAS INCLINED TO THINK SECOND OPTION PREFERABLE; OTHERWISE PARTIES INVOLVED IN DISPUTES SUCH AS CYPRUS OR MIDDLE EAST MIGHT BE CONCERNED

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 USUN N 02724 01 OF 02 290247Z POSS DUPE

AT SECRET SC DISCUSSION.

4. WALDHEIM AGREED THAT MEETING SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM, NOT SC CHAMBER, IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE FEELING OF INFORMALITY. HE ALSO AGREED THAT ATTENDANCE SHOULD BE VERY LIMITED, PROBABLY TO PRINCIPAL AND ONE AIDE RATHER THAN PRINCIPALS ONLY, SINCE HE ASSUMED MOST FMS WOULD WISH TO HAVE PERMREP WITH THEM. IT WAS AGREED THAT MOST OF DAY WOULD BE REQUIRED AND IN DISCUSSING DATES IT APPEARED THAT END OF FIRST WEEK OF GA WOULD PROBABLY BE MOST SUITABLE (SEPT 22-23). MEETING MIGHT START FRIDAY AFTER LUNCH AND RUN OVER TO SATURDAY MORNING. (THIS WOULD AVOID CLASH WITH MAJOR STATEMENTS IN GA GENERAL DEBATE). BARTON NOTED THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA WOULD BE SC PRES IN SEPT AND THAT THIS MIGHT MAKE SOVIETS MORE RECEPTIVE TO IDEA. (FRANCE ASSUMES CHAIR IN OCT.) ALL AGREED THIS WOULD NOT BE A CLOSED MEETING OF THE SC BUT AN INFORMAL MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE SC, REQUIRING NO RECORD.

5. IN LIGHT OF SYG'S FAVORABLE REACTION, BARTON SAID HE WOULD EXPLORE MATTER WITH OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS WITH VIEW

TO INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON SETTING DATE AND OTHER PREPARATIONS DURING HIS SC PRESIDENCY IN JULY. WALDHEIM SUGGESTED HE TALK FIRST WITH SOVIETS SINCE HE KNEW GROMYKO WAS RELUCTANT TO BE PLACED IN SITUATION WHERE HE WAS TOGETHER WITH CHINSE IN SMALL GROUP. IF SOVIETS OR OTHERS OBJECTED, WE WOULD BE UNABLE TO PROCEED. HOWEVER, IF MEETING WERE HELD AND WERE SUCCESSFUL IT MIGHT BE REPEATED OR TRIED PERIODICALLY AT THE PERMREP LEVEL. WALDHEIM INDICATED HIS AGREEMENT.

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PAGE 01 USUN N 02724 02 OF 02 290324Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 02724

6. SYG SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO RAISE ANOTHER MATTER -- THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S "ILLNESS" DUE TO ITS ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH TOO MANY SUBJECTS AND THE GROWING NUMBER OF ITEMS HANDLED DIRECTLY IN PLENARY. HE SAID HE PLANNED TO RECOMMEND IN HIS REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY THAT IN PRINCIPLE ITEMS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FIRST IN COMMITTEE. LEONARD AND BARTON BOTH EXPRESSED AGREEMENT ON BOTH POINTS.

7. WALDHEIM NOTED THAT WHEN UN HAD 51 MEMBERS THERE WERE 20-25 ITEMS ON THE GA AGENDA; NOW WITH 149 MEMBERS THERE ARE OVER 120 ITEMS. IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO WEED SOME OF THEM OUT AS SITUATION WAS GETTING OUT OF CONTROL. HE REALIZED THERE WAS ALWAYS ONE DELEGATION OR A FEW WHO WISHED TO RETAIN AN ITEM, BUT HE WAS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING MAKING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE ASSEMBLY OF ITEMS THAT COULD BE DELETED. HE THOUGHT THERE WERE 30 OR 40 BUT WOULD CONSIDER IT FORTUNATE IF 10 OR 12 WERE ACTUALLY

ELIMINATED. BARTON NOTED THAT MANY OVERLAPPED AND COULD BE COMBINED, ESPECIALLY AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EAST ITEMS.

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PAGE 02 USUN N 02724 02 OF 02 290324Z

8. WALDHEIM THOUGHT THE PRINCIPAL BUDGET CONTRIBUTORS COULD HELP AS HE HAD NOTICED THEIR REPS IN SUBSTANTIVE DEBATES OFTEN ACQUIESCED IN PROPOSALS FOR NEW PROGRAMS WHICH IN FIFTH COMMITTEE THEIR REPS OPPOSED ON BUDGETARY GROUNDS. IF THEY TOOK STAND DURING SUBSTANTIVE CONSIDERATION THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO PREVENT ADOPTION OF SOME NEW PROJECTS.

9. BARTON WONDERED IF GENERAL COMMITTEE OF GA COULD BE TASKED WITH SETTING UP WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW AGENDA. LEONARD NOTED THERE HAD BEEN A PROPOSAL FOR SMALL GROUP TO MEET PRIOR TO GA TO CONSIDER PROBLEM, BUT SYG SAID NOTHING HAD COME TO THIS IDEA. LEONARD THOUGHT IF SMALL NEUTRAL GROUP REVIEWED AGENDA AND MADE DEMARCHES TO DELEGATIONS IT MIGHT BE ABLE TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT FOR ELIMINATION OF SOME ITEMS ON BASIS OF PACKAGE DEAL, SYG COULD SUPPORT EFFORTS OF SUCH A GROUP. BARTON THOUGHT OUTGOING GA PRES MOJSOV, WHO HAD INDICATED INTEREST IN PROBLEM, MIGHT REFER TO IT IN HIS ADDRESS TO 33RD GA AND SUGGEST GENERAL COMMITTEE ACTION. PERHAPS HE COULD EVEN CONSULT REGIONAL GROUP CHAIRMEN BEFORE GA AND ASK THEM TO CONSIDER MATTER WITH MOJSOV WHO MIGHT HAVE SOME IDEAS. IN CLOSING HE NOTED THERE WAS ALSO A SUGGESTION THAT BEFORE ADJOURNING A GA SHOULD ELECT THE BUREAU FOR THE NEXT REGULAR SESSION, SO THAT IT COULD WORK ON QUESTIONS SUCH AS THIS BETWEEN SESSIONS.

LEONARD

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